



# Commandant's NOTE

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## THE SOLDIER SYSTEM

The most important combat multiplier the United States Army has is the soldier. The soldier is, in effect, part of a complex system of systems that also includes everything personally worn, carried, or consumed in a tactical environment.

Historically, soldier items have been designed against separate, unrelated requirements, often by independent organizations, and then fielded piecemeal. Funding support has been fragmented. In general, soldier systems have not fared well when competing against major hardware systems for resources.

As the conscience of the Army for the individual soldier, the Infantry School is dedicated to improving the soldier's combat effectiveness. Undergirding this effort are two Department of the Army initiatives announced in recent years — the Soldier Modernization Plan (SMP) and the Soldier Enhancement Program (SEP).

The SMP covers the full range of research, development, acquisition, and fielding programs for the soldier. It is a total Army effort that includes input from all U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) schools. The basic strategy is to draw upon recent achievements and advances in state-of-the-art technology in industry, the technical expertise found in the Army itself, and the knowledge gained by the other U.S. military services, academia, and our allies in an effort to integrate those achievements and advances into our soldiers' warfighting capabilities.

The SMP provides an evolutionary approach to solutions by outlining near-term, mid-term, and far-term objectives in lethality, command and

control, survivability, mobility, and sustainment. The near-term (Fiscal Years 1991-1993) and mid-term (FYs 1994-1997) are transition periods. The far-term envisions fielding a Block I soldier as a system during the period of FYs 1998-2006 and a Block II future soldier system in FY 2007 and beyond.

A basic precept in soldier modernization is the realization that while the greatest possible commonality and interchangeability are highly desirable, significant differences exist among various groups of soldiers in terms of the threat they face, their operational environment, and the load they have to carry. These differences frequently warrant specialized solutions. To recognize their unique needs and to ensure the proper determination of requirements, soldiers will be classified as dismounted combat soldiers, combat crew soldiers (air and ground), and soldiers.

The Soldier Integrated Protective Ensemble (SIPE) Advanced Technology Transition Demonstration (ATT) is an ongoing program that exemplifies the SMP strategy and the soldier system approach to improving combat effectiveness. Although the initial emphasis of the SIPE effort is on the dismounted soldier, the multitude of diverse technologies will have broad applications for all soldiers.

The SIPE ATT will exploit the most promising high payoff technologies and engineer a modular, head-to-toe fighting system that provides a soldier improved lethality and survivability against multiple battlefield threats as well as improved